



Parkside Primary School

Whole School Food Policy

Reviewed June 2025

Introduction

Parkside is committed to promoting and cultivating a healthy lifestyle culture within our school. We understand that a healthy diet is crucial to a child's health, wellbeing, learning and achievement both now and in the future. We recognise the importance of educating our pupils and developing positive attitudes towards food and a healthy diet. We believe that our school, in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals within our community, can work together in order to encourage our pupils to make informed healthy food decisions by increasing awareness and understanding of food.

Aims and Objectives

- To improve the health of our pupils, staff and the whole school community by increasing knowledge of what constitutes a healthy diet.
- To ensure pupils have access to quality, appetising, and nutritious food.
- To ensure pupils stay hydrated and have access to safe, drinking water during the school day.
- To promote healthy eating practices within our school and discourage unhealthy food choices.
- To provide opportunities for all pupils to prepare healthy snacks and dishes.
- To ensure the provision of food within our school takes into careful consideration of the ethical and medical requirements of pupils and staff, e.g. religious, vegetarian, medical and allergenic needs.
- To educate our staff, pupils and their families about the risks and negative effects of an unhealthy lifestyle.

Responsibility

The role of parents/carers

We at Parkside, are aware that educating children about food and promoting a healthy eating culture lies primarily with parents and carers. We wish to foster positive and supportive partnerships with the families of our pupils through mutual understanding and co-operation. We will aim to do this in the following ways:

- Regularly provide parents/carers with information and advice regarding healthy eating so that parents can reinforce the key messages that children receive at school.
- Ensure the Whole School Food Policy is accessible to all families via the Parkside School website.
- Encourage parents/carers to promote a healthy eating culture when participating in food-related events within school.

The role of the Healthy Schools Co-ordinator

It is the role of the co-ordinator to inform staff and parents about Parkside's Whole School Food policy and that it is implemented effectively.

The co-ordinator will ensure that staff are aware of the school's healthy practices and are appropriately trained to teach about healthy eating.

The co-ordinator will work closely with kitchen staff and lunchtime staff to encourage children to make healthy eating choices.

The co-ordinator liaises with external organisations and professionals in order to deliver a successful healthy eating education programme within the school.

The co-ordinator will promote the school's healthy eating culture in a variety of ways, e.g. displays, clubs, information packs, etc.

The role of teachers and support staff

We emphasise the importance of healthy eating throughout the school and all staff, including teaching, support and catering staff are expected to implement The Whole School Food Policy. We recognise that opportunities to teach about healthy lifestyles exist throughout the curriculum. Staff at Parkside guide pupils to make healthy lifestyle choices wherever possible and actively act as role models to demonstrate positive attitudes to healthy eating. This includes not visibly drinking fizzy drinks or eating sugary snacks in the presence of children.

The role of catering and lunchtime staff

Caterers and kitchen staff are responsible for providing high quality food that is in line with the national nutritional standards for school food. They contribute to a welcoming eating environment where pupils can freely sit with their friends. Parents receive the catering menu for the term and a daily menu of the food options are displayed for pupils in the dining area. Lunchtime staff encourage children to make their own food choices and allow plenty of time to eat their meals. They will also ensure that children who receive a school meal will be given a balanced plate of food. They will also observe children who bring packed lunches to check what lunches are being prepared at home and if they are suitable and don't contain any food with allergies. Lunchtime staff will monitor whether children are eating a sufficient amount of lunch, and should any concerns arise, parents/carers and teachers will be notified.

Curriculum and assessment

Pupils at Parkside are explicitly taught about the importance of nutrition, a balanced diet and healthy food choices within the PSHE, Science and D&T curriculum where children are given the opportunity to explore a range of healthy recipes and have an understanding of healthier alternatives. This is also promoted through our Life Skills

targets at Parkside. Our D&T curriculum has a strong focus on cooking skills, whereby children develop the skills necessary to safely prepare healthy meals and snacks using a variety of tools. Teachers assess their pupils' knowledge and understanding of the principles of having a healthy and varied diet along with pupils' confidence to prepare dishes and their understanding of where food comes from. The children learn the importance of a balanced diet, the range of food groups, seasonal produce and how to adapt a recipe. In KS2 they begin to look into costs and a budget when preparing food. Pupils learn about the requirements for plant growth, the food chain and the components of a healthy diet through the Science curriculum. This is evident in the Science planning.

School Meals

School meals at Parkside are cooked on-site and are provided by Waltham Forest Catering, who adhere to the School Food Standards. Pupils have access to a well-stocked salad bar which includes a wide range of salad items that pupils enjoy. Pupils' are rewarded with stickers for making healthy choices. The dining area promotes a positive atmosphere whereby pupils may sit with their friends and develop their personal and social skills. Staff are always on-hand to provide support and assistance, especially to our younger pupils. Staff encourage pupils to taste new foods and flavours and discuss the importance of healthy eating with children. We encourage parents/carers across the school to take up the government's free school meals initiative. We strongly believe that a nutritious, hot meal is incredibly beneficial for children's learning and development.

We ask that parents/carers notify the school of any special diets and/or allergies that the school will need to take into account. The school provides a halal option for pupils that require it and pupils with allergies are taken into careful account.

Packed Lunches

We believe that all pupils should receive a balanced and nutritious diet and therefore, packed lunches should also offer a meal that is of quality and as healthy as a school meal. We encourage parents to provide a balanced lunch that aims to reflect the government's revised Eatwell Guide, which can be found at the end of this policy as well as on the school website.

Parkside is committed to combating the rise of obesity levels in our community so we ask that packed lunches do not contain any fizzy drinks and that fruit juices are kept to a minimum, as some do contain large amounts of natural sugars. We teach children to enjoy treats in moderation and therefore strongly recommend that sweets and chocolates are also limited to a small portion per week. The school does not provide facilities where children can re-heat food nor do we consider it safe to do so, therefore we strongly advise that packed lunches do not contain food items that have been pre-heated.

If pupils have grapes in their packed lunches, we urge parents to slice them in half lengthways, especially for younger pupils, as whole grapes can pose a choking hazard. We cannot allow nuts, nutty foods or Nutella type spreads in any packed lunch due to pupils within our school who have severe nut allergies.

Lunchtime staff are expected to regularly monitor pupil's packed lunches to ensure that they are receiving a healthy, balanced and nutritious meal. Lunchtime staff will work with the Healthy Schools Coordinator to address any concerns.

Snacks

All children in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 are provided with fruit or vegetables during break time. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to bring in fruit from home which they can have during morning break. Children are encouraged and constantly reminded to have their snack in a designated area within the playground to keep safe.

As part of the school's endeavours to promote healthy eating, we only allow healthy snacks to be brought in from home. Fizzy drinks, sugary snacks or crisps are not permitted at break time.

Staying hydrated

It is very important that children stay well hydrated during the day, especially during the summer months. Pupils in the Nursery are provided with milk in addition to water which they help themselves to at any time. All pupils in the school are encouraged to bring in a water bottle so that they can have access to water throughout the day. Water fountains are installed in Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and Reception playgrounds for easy access to water during lunch and break. Children receiving a school meal are provided with water or a low sugar fruit juice.

Celebrations

At Parkside, we recognise that food contributes to a sense of celebration and sharing during birthdays or special events. On such occasions, foods other than fruit or vegetables may be offered, but staff will remind pupils that these are "special treats" and not foods that we should consume every day. On special school celebrations such as Spanish day, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Eid and others, we offer cultural themed cuisine to develop children's cultural capital.

Allergies and dietary requirements

At Parkside, staff are made aware of pupils with allergies, particularly nut allergies. We ask parents/carers to refrain from bringing in food products that may contain nuts. Parkside cannot guarantee that all parents will comply with the request, however staff do regularly monitor food that is brought in.

Parents/carers of pupils with any allergies or dietary requirements are asked to provide as much information as possible about which foods are suitable and which food should be avoided. All allergy and dietary information is always displayed in the staff room, the pupil's classroom as well as the kitchen. Children with any allergies or dietary requirements are given a badge stating their allergy/dietary requirement that must be worn when in the dinner hall. This is for catering, lunchtime and any other staff member to be aware of.

Cooking Classes

Our pupils are given the unique opportunity to participate in cooking classes as part of our enrichment programme. We place a strong focus on making a range of healthy dishes, from fruit salads to vegetable fajitas. We aim to teach children how to safely use equipment and appliances such as electric pans, blenders, graters, etc. The cooking classes enable children to explore and develop a range of cooking skills to prepare simple dishes safely and with control, including slicing, peeling, mashing, mixing, stirring, beating, grating, etc.

When planning for cooking lessons, we ensure that children with dietary requirements are catered for, usually with substitute ingredients or changes in recipes. This is to ensure that all children have the same opportunities to participate in all aspects of the cooking lessons. Further information about our cooking classes can be found in our Cooking Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The effective implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Healthy Schools Co-ordinator, DT Co-ordinator and the Head teacher.

The policy will be reviewed every 2 years through a survey of the views of the whole school community, including pupils, staff and parents.

Eatwell Guide

Check the label on packaged foods

Each serving (150g) contains

Energy	Fat	Saturated	Sugars	Salt
1040kJ 250kcal	3.0g	1.3g	34g	0.9g
	LOW	LOW	HIGH	MED
13%	4%	7%	38%	15%

of an adult's reference intake

Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ/ 167kcal

Choose foods lower in fat, salt and sugars

Use the Eatwell Guide to help you get a balance of healthier and more sustainable food. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group.

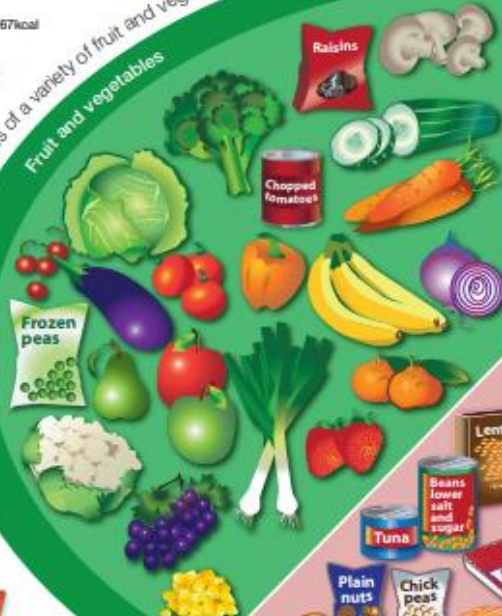
6-8 a day

Water, lower fat milk, sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count.

Limit fruit juice and/or smoothies to a total of 150ml a day.

Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day

Fruit and vegetables



Eat less often and in small amounts

Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions with less added fat, salt and sugar



Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

Eat more beans and pulses, 2 portions of sustainably sourced fish per week, one of which is oily. Eat less red and processed meat



Dairy and alternatives

Choose lower fat and lower sugar options



Choose unsaturated oils and use in small amounts

Per day 2000kcal 2500kcal = ALL FOOD + ALL DRINKS